

passing cutting-edge legislation which increased the state minimum wage for millions of workers, Monica has dedicated her life's work to protecting voter rights, mobilizing some of the largest civil rights protests in Florida's history, reducing class sizes in Florida's schools, advocating for immigrants' rights, implementing safe staffing levels in Florida's nursing homes and led the charge to institute the state's first early voting process so working people can make their votes count.

Her commitment to building new leaders and developing a legacy of partnership and collaboration in Florida has helped build an influential grassroots political base. She was the first labor leader to serve as a commissioner on Florida's Commission for Women and was named the Top 40 Most Powerful Democrats by Politics Magazine in 2009.

Ms. Russo has served on the South Florida Workforce Investment Board, Florida International University's Research Institute for Social and Economic Policy and has worked closely with me as a trusted and valued advisor to my Healthcare Working Group.

The daughter of Lincoln University professors, Monica grew up in rural Pennsylvania and speaks English, Spanish, Portuguese, French and Haitian Kreyol. She graduated magna cum laude from Georgetown University and lives in Miami with her daughter, Giovanna.

Monica Russo's commitment to our nation's working families is exemplary, and I am proud to call her my sister and dear and treasured friend. I will miss her guidance and wisdom, but our loss is her family's gain. I wish her a hearty congratulations on her retirement and am grateful for her invaluable work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BILL HUIZENGA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Mr. HUIZENGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today regarding missed votes due to a death in the family. Had I been present for roll call vote number 225, On Agreeing to the Rep. LEVIN of Michigan Part B Amendment No. 9 for the National Apprenticeship Act of 2020, I would have voted "nay." Had I been present for roll call vote number 226, On Agreeing to the Rep. SMUCKER of Pennsylvania Part B Amendment No. 15 for the National Apprenticeship Act of 2020, I would have voted "yea." Had I been present for roll call vote No. 227, On Passage of the bill National Apprenticeship Act of 2020, and for other purposes, I would have voted "nay."

WEDDING CONGRATULATIONS FOR FRANCOIS GENARD AND CHRISTINE SASTRI

HON. TJ COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Mr. COX of California. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize and congratulate Mr. Francois Genard and Ms. Christine Sastri on their upcoming wedding in September of 2021. I

would not be here today as a Member of Congress but for Francois' efforts, talent and capabilities. I am honored to call him a friend and colleague. Together with Chrissy, they serve as an example of the character, capability and professionalism that serves our nation well.

As the Chief of Staff, Francois has shown great skill in leading our team to best serve the interests of the Central Valley. His tireless work serving all our communities is invaluable, and his strong leadership and foresight should be emulated by all. Francois' efforts have turned our office into a family, and our team is grateful for all he has done.

I offer my warmest congratulations and best wishes to Francois and Chrissy as they begin this new chapter in their lives. We all join their family and friends in celebrating this wonderful milestone. I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in celebrating this couple as they continue to build a happy, healthy life together.

HONORING MAYOR FREDERICK LEDESMA

HON. JIMMY PANETTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Mr. PANETTA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor retiring Mayor of Soledad, Frederick "Fred" Ledesma, for his outstanding career in public service and his commitment to the people of the central coast of California. His professional accomplishments and leadership in the community over the span of two decades have profoundly touched the lives of many, and I congratulate him on his retirement.

Fred has been a lifelong resident of the City of Soledad. Following in the footsteps of his father, Frank Ledesma, Fred served on the Soledad City Council from 1990 to 2000. He then held the position of Mayor of the City of Soledad from 1992 to 1994 prior to returning to the office in 2010. During his time serving the City of Soledad, Fred has been heavily involved in a number of notable projects, including the Soledad Community Center, Vosti, Gallardo and Aaroe Park improvements, the Soledad Visitor's Center, the pending multi-theater cinema, the Soledad Hartnell Campus and Orchard Lane Park, and the recent creation of the Veterans Day Banner Program. Additionally, Fred has been a diligent voice for farmworker rights as well as a strong advocate for the passage of Measures Y and S, which will benefit the City and its residents for many years to come.

In addition to serving on numerous local and regional boards, including the City Parks & Recreation Committee, the Chair of the Association of California Cities Allied with Public Safety, the Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District, and the Monterey County Mayors Association, Fred has also been a friend to many in his community. He is well known by all for his outgoing demeanor, sense of humor, and respect for all. He has truly demonstrated a deep connection and commitment to his community, which has been felt by everyone who has had the pleasure of meeting him.

As he begins his retirement, I have no doubt that Fred will continue to serve his community.

We on the Central Coast are grateful for his lifetime of service to the City of Soledad and 20 years as a public official. Madam Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in honoring and congratulating Mayor Frederick Ledesma.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF MS. SHEILA PAUL

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and legacy of Ms. Sheila Paul. Sheila loved three things in her life: God, her family, and serving others. As a devoted member of the Usher and Diaconess teams for over 40 years, it is clear that Sheila's incredibly strong and caring soul made her a central part of her community. We have lost a great leader, a tremendous mother, and a dear friend.

Sheila dedicated her life to God and to others. She radiated a vibrant, tenacious spirit that made it known she was a child of God, drove her to serve, and that infected others. Her spirituality was present in everything she did and anyone that met her knew she was grounded in her faith. Her courage and determination was evident when she journeyed from Saint Louis du Nord, Haiti to Freeport, Bahamas and finally to the United States. She embodied the immigrant spirit and the American dream. Sheila carried her successful business to Fort Lauderdale, and expanded it into a thriving storefront and ventured into real estate, forever embedding her legacy in the community.

Sheila forged strong connections with everyone she met and exemplified what it means to be a child of Christ through her generosity and kindness. She would feed anyone who came to her house and extended her hand to anyone in need. She always went above and beyond to improve the lives of those around her.

To Sheila, family was of the upmost importance. She was the proud wife of the late Alberto Michael Joseph and the proud mother of eight biological children: Alberta, Duval, Rosianne, Linda, Ancelot (AJ), Guillene, Bernadette, and Carole. As an immigrant she faced many hardships and made great sacrifices for her children, and strove to improve the circumstances of all, so they may benefit from an education, an opportunity she valued immensely. In addition to her immediate family, she was the adopted mother to hundreds of children which she considered her own. Sheila was a caring and selfless mother to all who had the privilege to know her. She was a true trailblazer, a steady leader and caregiver, and lived her life the way we should all strive to, with an abundance of love.

Madam Speaker, Ms. Sheila Paul has indeed left an indelible mark on her loved ones and her community, and it will be present for future generations to come. She will be dearly missed.